

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 TRSE-00 ACDA-12
/073 W

-----037600 181625Z /45

O R 181325Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9553
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
USMISSION USNATO
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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, TU
SUBJECT: TURKISH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FINALLY ELECTS ITS SPEAKER

REF: ANKARA 8275 (DTG 101411Z NOV 77)

1. THE TURKISH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (NA) ON NOV. 17 ELECTED
REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) DEPUTY CAHIT KARAKAS AS SPEAKER,
ENDING MORE THAN FIVE MONTHS OF HITHERTO FRUITLESS MANEUVERING
WHICH HAD TOTALLY PARALYZED THE NA SINCE THE JUNE 5 GENERAL
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ELECTIONS. NOW THE NA CAN SET UP ITS COMMITTEES AND PROCEED
TO FUNCTION.

2. ELECTION OF KARAKAS WAS THE RESULT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN
THE MODERATE-LEFT REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY AND THE EXTREME
RIGHT NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (NAP). THE NAP HAD EARLIER
SUPPORTED THE CANDIDATE OF ITS COALITION PARTNER, THE JUSTICE

PARTY (JP), BUT, FOLLOWING THROUGH ON ITS ANNOUNCED INTENTIONS OF SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, IT REACHED AGREEMENT WITH THE RPP WHEN THE FAILURE OF OTHER FORMULAS THREATENED TO DRAG OUT THE SPEAKER-SHIP ISSUE INDEFINITELY. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AGREEMENT, THE RPP PRESENTED A LIST OF 15 RPP DEPUTIES, FROM WHICH THE NAP SELECTED KARAKAS. ALL 16 OF THE NAP DEPUTIES AND 211 (ALL BUT THREE) OF THE RPP'S WERE PRESENT FOR THE BALLOTING, ALTHOUGH THE TOTAL OF 227 VOTES (ONE MORE THAN REQUIRED) FOR KARAKAS PROBABLY INCLUDED SOME VOTES FROM THE JP AS WELL AS FROM SMALL PARTIES AND INDEPENDENTS.

3. ACCORDING TO NOV. 18 PRESS, THE PROPOSED COOPERATION BETWEEN THE RPP AND ITS ERSTWHILE ARCHVILLAIN AROUNDED MIS-GIVINGS AND CRITICISM WITHIN THE RPP. LEFTIST DEPUTY SULEYMAN GENC (RPP-IZMIR) REPORTEDLY ASKED, IN THE RPP GROUP MEETING PRECEDING THE VOTE, "PREVIOUSLY WE LEGITIMIZED THE NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY; NOW ARE WE GOING TO LEGITIMIZE THE NAP?" THERE WAS ALSO RESENTMENT OVER THE NAP'S STIPULATION THAT THE RPP CANDIDATE HAD TO BE ANTI-COMMUNIST AND MODERATE; SOME FELT THIS IMPLIED THAT THOSE CHARACTERISTICS DO NOT APPLY TO THE RPP'S PREVIOUS CONDIDATE, KAYA BENGISU (WHO IS CLOSE TO GENC) AND TO OTHERS NOT ON THE LIST OF 15 NAMES. RPP LEADER BULENT ECEVIT, ACCORDING TO PRESS COUNTS, SETTLED THE ARGUMENT BY TAKING FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONSEQUENCES UPON HIMSELF AND BY DECLARING THAT, GIVEN THE NATURE OF THE RPP, ALL ITS MEMBERS ARE KNOWN TO BE ANTI-COMMUNIST AND ANTI-FASCIST.

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ECEVIT ALSO REPORTEDLY STATED THAT COOPERATING WITH A PARTY IN ORDER TO ENABLE THE NA TO BEGIN FUNCTIONING WAS DIFFERENT FROM COOPERATING WITH A PARTY WITHIN A GOVERNMENT.

4. ASKED TO COMMENT ON KARAKAS'S IMPENDING ELECTION, JP HEAD, PRIME MINISTER SULEYMAN DEMIREL, TOLD REPORTERS DURING THE BALLOTING, "THE MATTER IS IN ITS PROPER PLACE. IF IT HAS A POSITIVE RESULT, AN IMPORTANT PROBLEM OF THE COUNTRY WILL LEAVE THE AGENDA."

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5. KARAKAS, THE NEW SPEAKER, IS A FORMER JP MEMBER WHO SERVED IN THE FIRST ERIM CABINET (1971) AS MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND LATER AS MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS. HE RESIGNED FROM THE CABINET, AND SOON AFTERWARD FROM THE JP, IN LATE 1971, DUE TO DISSATISFACTION WITH WHAT HE CONSIDERED TO BE AN EXCESSIVE DRIFT TO THE RIGHT, AND JOINED THE RPP IN 1973. BORN IN ZONGULDAK IN 1928, HE HAS REPRESENTED THE PROVINCE SINCE 1965. KARAKAS, AN ENGINEER, GRADUATED FROM ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY AND RECEIVED HIS DOCTORATE FROM BERLIN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY. HE HAS HEADED VARIOUS NA COMMITTEES AND HAS BEEN TURKISH GROUP LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HEAD IN THE NATO PARLIAMENTARIANS AND MEMBER OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL OF THE TURKISH ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION, AS WELL AS HEAD OF THE TURCO-GERMAN PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP GROUP. ASIDE FROM FLUENT GERMAN, HE ALSO KNOWS SOME FRENCH AND ENGLISH. HE IS MARRIED AND HAS TWO CHILDREN.

6. COMMENT: ELECTION OF KARAKAS REPRESENTS A SUCCESS IN THE NAP'S CAMPAIGN TO PRESENT ITSELF AS A MODERATE AND CONSTRUCTIVE FORCE. WHILE IT MOVES THE CONCEPT OF AN RPP-NAP COALITION A LITTLE FARTHER OUT OF THE REALM OF UNTHINKABILITY, SUCH A FORMULA IS STILL UNLIKELY, GIVEN THE HOSTILITY OF THE RPP LEFT, COMBINED WITH PRESENT PARLIAMENTARY ARITHMETIC (THE

RPP PLUS THE NAP WOULD HAVE A MAJORITY OF ONLY FIVE--IF THERE WERE NO DEFECTIONS). DEMIREL'S APPARENT UNCONCERN OVER THE DEAL BETWEEN HIS COALITION PARTNER AND THE OPPOSITION IS STRIKING, AND SUGGESTS THAT HE MAY HAVE SECRETLY APPROVED OR EVEN ENCOURAGED IT. THE ARRANGMENT ACCEPTED BY THE NAP WAS ESSENTIALLY THAT REJECTED EARLIER BY THE JP, WHICH HAD BEEN HOPING TO GET THE RPP TO AGREE TO A ROTATION SCHEME; DEMIREL COULD HAVE SEEN THE NAP-RPP DEAL AS A WAY OF SETTLING THE SPEAKERSHIP ISSUE WITHOUT THE JP'S HAVING TO BACK DOWN.
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